

PREFACE

ON presenting this Volume to my Country, it is not necessary to enter into a particular account of those voyages whose journals form the principal part of it, as they will be found, I trust, to explain themselves. It appears, however, to be a duty, which the Public have a right to expect from me, to state the reasons which have influenced me in delaying the publication of them.

It has been asserted, that a misunderstanding between a person high in office and myself, was the cause of this procrastination. It has also been propagated, that it was occasioned by that precaution which the policy of commerce will sometimes suggest; but they are both equally devoid of foundation. The one is an idle tale; and there could be no solid reason for concealing the circumstances of discoveries, whose arrangements and prosecution were so honourable to my associates and myself, at whose expence they were undertaken. The delay actually arose from the very active and busy mode of life in which I was engaged since the voyages have